

**Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.**  
Governor

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State Health Commissioner



Come to this year's INShape Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair (July 19-22) at the Indiana Black Expo's Summer Celebration (July 12-22), and learn new ways to have a safe home environment. Admittance to the Health Fair is free to the general public on the first day. The Health Fair offers a great opportunity for attendees to receive more than \$1,000 in free health screenings, as well as education on ways to improve health and prevent disease. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn tips on how to eliminate secondhand smoke from their homes, check for lead poisoning, and prevent injuries.

One way to have a safer home is to eliminate secondhand smoke from the environment. More than 30 percent of Hoosier children aged 0-14 are exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes. Each year, Indiana treats more than 11,000 childhood asthma cases linked to exposure from secondhand smoke, costing nearly \$9 million. It is important to teach children to protect themselves from secondhand smoke. You can do this by posting "No Smoking" signs at entrances to let visitors know the home is smoke-free. Children learn values and behaviors by example. Kids who grow up in a household where smoking occurs are more than twice as likely to smoke than children who grow up in smoke free homes. If you smoke, do not smoke around your children. Keep your home and car tobacco-free. If one parent quits smoking before their child is 8 or 9 years old, his/her child's odds of being a regular smoker decrease by 25 percent. If both parents quit, the odds go down to 40 percent. Ready to quit? Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Lead poisoning is the most serious environmental health problems that children face, but it is also preventable. National data indicate that the most common source of lead exposure for children is related to lead-based paint in older housing, especially lead-contaminated dust generated in older housing. In Indiana, 80 percent of the lead exposure found is from housing alone, or housing combined with other sources. Indiana has 717,111 houses built before 1950, ranking 11th in the nation. Another source of lead hazard exposure is "take-home" lead dust on the clothing of parent's who work in a lead-related industry.

Lead can poison anyone. The negative health effects can be worse for children because lead can affect the development of their bodies including, and especially their brains. Early screening, detection and intervention are key elements in preventing this significant health problem.

Many other injuries that occur in the home are also preventable. Poisonings can be prevented by locking up all household products and medications out of children's reach and sight. All drugs, household products, and pesticides should be kept in their original containers. A carbon monoxide detector is also helpful near the sleeping area.

In addition, while many people may think of home falls as a problem for the elderly, falls are second only to poisoning as the reason for accidental deaths in the home. With common sense, most falls can be prevented. Be sure that the floors in your home are free of clutter. Avoid scatter rugs and highly waxed floors. Keep rooms well-lit, using nightlights in hallways and bathrooms. Installing grab bars in bathtubs and showers is also important.

Don't miss the Health Fair, now in Hall A at the Convention Center. Let's celebrate this summer by staying healthy, safe, and fit.

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*The Indiana State Department of Health supports Indiana's economic prosperity and quality of life by promoting, protecting and providing for the health of Hoosiers in their communities.*